HISTORY OF THE NORTH WING
DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
Prepared by Oehrlein & Associates Architects

THE ARCHITECT

Alfred Bult Mullett was born in Taunton, Somerset County, England on April 7, 1834 (Photo 2-1). In 1845, he moved with his family to Glendale, a suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio. During the late 1850's he travelled in Europe and upon his return to Cincinnati, he began work in the office of Isaiah Rogers Son & Company, rising soon to become chief draftsman and later a partner.[1] When Rogers dissolved the partnership and moved to Nashville, Tennessee, Mullett opened his own office.[2]

On January 6, 1863, Salmon Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, wrote to Mullett that he had been appointed a Clerk in the Bureau of Construction, at a compensation of $1,400 a year[3] and on April 23rd of that year he was appointed Chief Clerk at a compensation of $2,000 a year.[4] On June 10, 1863, Mullett was appointed Assistant Supervising Architect[5], and on June 12, he was appointed to take over the duties of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Building during Isaiah Rogers' absence.[6] Rogers resigned in September 1865, and although Mullett had already taken over his duties, he was not officially appointed Supervising Architect until May 29, 1866 at a yearly salary of $3,000.[7]

Five months after his official appointment as Supervising Architect, Mullett married Pacific Pearl Myrick, daughter of a sea captain and shipowner from San Francisco. They had six children with the two eldest sons, Thomas and Frederick, becoming architects and joining their father in practice from 1875 to 1890.[8]

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[1] The Washington Post, October 21, 1890.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Letter from S. P. Chase to A. B. Mullett, Esq., January 6, 1863, Personal Folder of A. B. Mullett, National Archives, Record Group 56.

[4] Letter from Geo. Harrington to A. B. Mullett, Esq., April 23, 1863, National Archives, RG 56.

[5] Letter to A. B. Mullett, Esq. from S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, June 10, 1863, National Archives, RG 56.

[6] Letter to A. B. Mullett from S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, June 12, 1863, National Archives, RG 56.

[7] Letter from H. McCulloch to A. B. Mullett, Esq., May 29, 1866, National Archives, RG 56.

[8] Lawrence Wodehouse, "Alfred B. Mullett and His French Style Government Buildings," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. 31, No. 1, March 1972, p. 23.

Mullett was a respected member of Washington society, a member of the Masons, and a competent architect. The buildings he designed between 1865 and 1875 varied from simple two story post offices in small towns, such as the Custom Houses and Post Offices in Cairo, Illinois (1869-1872), Astoria, Oregon (1869-1873) and Rockland, Maine (1873-1877), to large classically detailed city structures, such as the New York Post Office and Courthouse (1869-1875) and the State, War and Navy Building (1871-1887), which cost more than $10 million. In all, he produced about $50 million of well designed government buildings.

Mullett's styles ranged from simple early Renaissance Revival (Assay Office, Boise, Idaho) to more elegant classical buildings (Custom House and Post Office, Ogdenburg, New York), with his most notable structures the six immense and richly decorated post offices-courthouses-customhouses in the French Second Empire style located in Boston, Cincinnati, New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis and Washington (the State, War and Navy Building).[9] Of these, only the St. Louis and Washington buildings remain.

The State, War and Navy Building (now the Old Executive Office Building) epitomized Mullett's career. Although construction began in 1871 it took seventeen years to complete. During its construction, as electricity and telephones were made available, they were incorporated into the building's design. When the building was finally completed in 1888, it was the largest office building in the world, with ten acres of floor space and 553 rooms.[10]

Construction of federal buildings under Mullett's direction focused on a mixture of styles, solid construction, and the use of rich, imposing materials to provide dignity to the structures. Exteriors were usually of local granite, sandstone or limestone. Interiors were greatly embellished by the use of marble block floors; oak, walnut, cherry or mahogany millwork; leather upholstery; and marble fireplaces for ventilation.[11]

During this era, architects were inundated with new technical improvements and new materials: new heating systems, elevators, electricity and sanitary equipment, as well as iron, steel and glass. Fireproofing was a major concern and Mullett used brick interior partitions, wrought iron beam floors, and iron roof girders for protection.

Like his predecessor Robert Mills, as Supervising Architect Mullett, foresaw the "coming grandeur of Washington."[12] He complained about the cramped location of the Treasury Building, suggesting both condemning the buildings along the east side of 15th Street and relocating the street 60 feet to the east and turning the blocks between 14th and 15th Streets and Pennsylvania

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[9]Ibid., pp. 23-26.

[10]Lois Craig, The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in United States Government Building (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1977), pp. 156-159.

[11]Wodehouse, p. 31.

[12]L. L. Hunter, "Vision and Work: The Supervising Architect's Contribution to Magnificent Washington," Records of the Columbia Historical Society, 1957-1959, p. 78.

and New York Avenues into a park.[13] Although failing in these attempts, amid major controversy, he did build East Executive Avenue with its graceful curve around the south of the White House and supported A. J. Downing's proposal for building the Mall into the huge park it is today.

Mullett was well known for his acrid personality. He complained bitterly about the skylights of the day, calling the skylight on the south elevation of the Treasury Building, "an ingenious effort to destroy the architectural effect of the beautiful south portico," and a skylight on the west front of the Treasury, "an unsightly protruberance."[14]

As seen again and again in his annual reports to the Secretary of the Treasury, Mullett was highly critical of his predecessors:

> "[Of] the buildings . . . erected under the supervision of this office. . . most have proved failures, and all exhibit an almost incredible lack of judgement and architectural knowledge; the more surprising as the acknowledged deficiencies of the earlier buildings were not remedied in those of later construction. Costly cut stone structures, with cornices and gutters of galvanized iron; granite porticos, with cast-iron capitals and entablatures; brick edifices with elaborate dressings, ingeniously contrived to destroy the walls; roofs whose worthlessness was acknowledged by the designer. . .[15]

Controversy seemed to surround the Office of the Supervising Architects and Mullett was no exception. Ammi B. Young had been dismissed with charges of extravagance and waste; and Mullett was investigated four time while in office and again after his resignation with charges of alleged graft and illegal profits, however, the problems probably lay with his "unscrupulous subordinates" and none of the charges were ever substantiated.[16]

On November 21, 1874, Mullett tendered his resignation from office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury:

> The occurrences of this evening render it necessary for me to resign. . . my health as you know is broken down. I am consequently nervous and perhaps more irritable than I am aware. You are also aware that I consider the salary so inadequate that the office is of no value except so far as it affords an opportunity for making a reputation.[17]

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[13]Hunter, p. 79.

[14]Hunter, p. 78.

[15]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of Finances for the Year 1866 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1866), p. 190.

[16]Wodehouse, p. 34.

[17]Letter to B. H. Bristow from A. B. Mullett, November 21, 1874, National Archives, RG 56.

On October 2, 1876, amidst great opposition from his successor William A. Potter, the Secretary of the Treasury appointed Mullett the superintending architect of six buildings he had designed: the Custom Houses in Chicago, Illinois; Cincinnati, Ohio; Hartford, Connecticut; and St. Louis, Missouri; and Post Offices in Philadelphia and New York City.[18] Later, he set up private practice with his two eldest sons, Thomas A. Mullett, Frederick W. Mullett, and another partner J. F. Denison.[19]

In 1889, Mullett filed suit against the United States for $158,441 in professional fees for his work on the State, War and Navy Building, the District of Columbia Jail, and alterations to the Post Office Building (the Tariff Commission Building), but due to his delay in filing the claim, he received nothing.[20]

On October 20, 1890 at the age of 56, Mullett shot himself, which newspapers of the time attributed to "financial worries and despondency caused by ill health."[21]

Alfred B. Mullett's contribution to architecture across America was significant; he was the last of the government designers of the 19th century to rely upon the classical past for his inspiration.[22] As a leading developer of the Second Empire style in America, he designed the State, War and Navy Building and other federal buildings with the characteristic mansard roof, projecting pavilions and walls articulated by columns, pilasters and sculpture. He was equally at ease with other classical styles as well, using both neoclassical (San Francisco Mint) and Renaissance revival styles (Carson City Branch Mint).

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[18]Letter to A. B. Mullett from Lot M. Morrill, Secretary, October 2, 1976, National Archives, RG 56.

[19]Wodehouse, p. 36.

[20]Wodehouse, p. 37.

[21]The Washington Post, October 21, 1890.

[22]Wodehouse, p. 37.

CONSTRUCTION HISTORY

Early History

The Treasury Department was established by an act passed by the First Congress approved September 2, 1789. When the Federal Government moved from Philadelphia to Washington in 1800, the Treasury Department was housed in a small brick building designed by George Hatfield, an English architect, completed in 1799, located on the site of the present south wing.

This building caught fire three times: in 1801 when it was partially destroyed; in 1814 when it was completely destroyed by the British; and again in 1833 by arsonists after the building had been completely reconstructed, with this time only the fireproof wing remaining. After the third fire, the building was not rebuilt and from 1833 to 1836, the Department of the Treasury was housed in temporary quarters.

On July 4, 1836, Congress authorized $100,000 for the construction of "a fireproof building. . . for the present and future accommodations of the Treasury Department."[23] A number of new sites were discussed including Lafayette Square, between 7th and 8th and F and G Streets, and on land south of the President's House. Two designs were submitted, one by William P. Elliot, a draftsman in the Patent Office, and one by Robert Mills, an architect who at the time was in private practice in Washington. Mills, who had been a clerk in the Treasury Department located in the Capitol from 1830 to 1834, had prepared a report on the Treasury fire of 1833 which stressed that the vaulted construction of Latrobe's fireproof wing enabled it to survive the 1833 fire. Mills was an ardent supporter of fireproof construction, had studied Palladian, Roman and Greek styles under Hoban and Jefferson, and had acquired engineering skills under Latrobe.

Construction of the East Wing

Robert Mills' plans for the proposed new building called for an E-shaped building opening west towards the White House with a long east facade along 15th Street. Although no original drawings for the east wing have been found, an undated drawing prepared by Mills for Secretary of the Treasury Thomas Corwin shows the east wing running 550 feet along 15th Street, nearly 90 feet longer than the final length of 460 feet with porticoes linked by a terrace running along the west side of the building.

The east front and center wing were constructed from 1836 to 1842 with the east front running 347 feet along 15th Street and the center wing extending 110 feet to the west, with plans to build the north and south wings at a later time. The resulting building was T-shaped with a continuous Ionic colonnade facing 15th Street.

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[23] 24th Congress, Session 1, Ch. 353, 1836, p. 113 and as reported by Robert Mills, "Report of the Architect of Public Buildings," April 16, 1842, 27th Congress, 2nd Session, Report No. 460.

The east and center wings were constructed of sandstone and brick. Mills had specified granite for the facades, a stronger and more durable stone, but due to costs savings by using the government-owned quarry on the Potomac, Congress had insisted upon the use of Aquia Creek, Virginia sandstone (as were used on the Capitol and President's House).

Plans called for a fireproof building containing 114 offices with brick groin vaulted rooms on either side of a long barrel vaulted central corridor. This modular system could be used to expand the Treasury Building to any length. Structural vaults were constructed of brick using hydraulic cement rather than traditional lime mortar. Because the newly-developed cement produced greater adhesion with less settling than mortar, Mills was able to reduce the wall thickness to 2'-3" rather than the customary 3'-6".[24]

Construction of the east and center wings was plagued with problems. On site, obstacles included cracking in the plastering, difficulty in finding bricklayers experienced in the construction of groin arches, as well as inconveniences caused by the building being occupied even before the roof was built.[25] Mills was criticized by Congress, with Philadelphia architect Thomas Ustick Walter hired to critique the plans. In his March 29, 1838 report, Walter objected to the location, the plan, and the materials, and feared the building would collapse because of Mills' revolutionary use of 27 inch thick, rather than 44 inch thick walls to support the groined brick arches.[26] He further objected that the design would necessitate the removal of the State Department building, located on the site of the present north wing. A bill was introduced to remove the walls of the structure and the reuse of the materials in the construction of a fireproof building for the Post Office Department, to replace one which had recently burned. Construction was halted while the report was debated but was finally resumed, with occupation of the building beginning in August of 1839 and final completion in 1842 at a cost of $660,773.[27] The building had a total of 150 rooms with groined ceilings and narrow corridors resting on barrel arches from the partition walls.[28]

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[24]Betty, Bird, Architectural History of the Treasury Building in Brief, December 17, 1984, p. 6.

[25]Robert Mills, "Report of the Architect of Public Buildings," April 16, 1842, 27th Congress, 2nd Session, Rep. No. 460.

[26]United States Treasury Building 1800, n.d., n.p.

[27]A History of Public Buildings Under the Control of the Treasury Department (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1901), p. 85.

[28]A History of Public Buildings Under the Control of the Treasury Department (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1901), p. 85.

Construction of the South and West Wings

Due to rapid growth of the Treasury Department, additional space was required and on March 3, 1855, Congress appropriated $300,000 for the continuation of the Treasury building, following plans proposed by architect of the dome of the US Capitol, Thomas Walter.[29]

Mills submitted a report on the extension of both the south and north wings, with the south wing for the use of the Treasury Department, stating:

> "From the declinations of the ground at this end of the building, an additional story of rooms will be obtained; the first or Basement story, in this wing, will be nearly equal in height to those above, and consequently make equally good office rooms. The number of rooms for office purposes, furnished by this Wing, will be about 50, of the same general dimensions of those now occupied by your Department proper."[30]

Construction began in July 1855 with foundations laid for both the south and west wings. Preliminary designs for the wings had been prepared by Thomas U. Walter along with his critique of Mills' design. Architects Ammi Burnham Young and Isaiah Rogers refined the plans, designing interior details and supervised construction. Ammi B. Young, credited with design of the South Wing, served as Supervising Architect from 1853 to July 1862, when he was dismissed from his office by Secretary Chase and replaced by Isaiah Rogers, who remained until September 1865. Rogers is credited with construction of the west wing. Rogers also designed a proposal to remodel the East Front to replace Mills' original work, however, this was never carried out.

The south wing was completed in 1860 and occupied by September 1861, but due to insufficient funds, the west wing was not completed until 1864. Largely vacant at the start of the Civil War, the south wing served as temporary headquarters for Union troops and later the third floor of the west wing served as Andrew Johnson's office while Mrs. Lincoln vacated the White House.

The exterior of the south and west wings followed Mills' scheme, although due to advances in building technology, the type of construction and interior finishes differed considerably. Cast iron beams and columns instead of masonry bearing walls were used as a structural system with granite wall bearing exterior walls. On the interior, rich details such as fluted pilasters and ornate balusters reflected the romantic view of classical architecture popular in the mid-nineteenth century. These details, begun in the south wing, were continued into the west and north wings.

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[29]33rd Congress, Sess. II, Ch. 175, 1855, p. 648.

[30]Letter from Robert Mills to Secretary of the Treasury Thomas Corwin, n.d., National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26.

Construction of the North Wing

Original designs for both the south and north wings, each with a central portico, were prepared by Robert Mills, with the north wing to be occupied by the State Department. In an undated letter, Mills stated:

> "From the rise in the ground north of the present building, there will be one story less in height for office purposes, consequently the number of rooms will be less, about 12 or 13.
>
> The increasing demand of your Department for Office room would justify, the further extension of the building to the North, where it could be done in accordance with the original plan, and in better keeping with the Executive square, the wing at the North end coming into the same relative position with New York Avenue, that the south wing does with Pennsylvania Avenue, besides comporting with the future improvements for the War and Navy Department buildings on the other side of the square. By this means two objects will be attained namely 1st allowing the wing intended for the State Department to be erected without disturbing the present building occupied by this Department until the new building is finished and occupied, 2nd obtaining for the Treasury Department some 20 additional office rooms. . .
>
> The Estimate for each wing is $265,000
> And for the extension of present building 70 feet further North and removing the old building $100,000."[31]

By June 1857, at the time the south wing was being constructed, excavation, concrete foundations and area walls for the north end of the west wing were completed. Because the stones were headers spanning the entire wall and of uniform size, however, the quarry was unable to supply the stone as quickly as it was needed.[32] In March of 1859, due to failure of Congress to appropriate funds, the granite contractor, Beals & Dixon, received orders to suspend all further deliveries of materials for the west and north wings of the building and to furnish granite only for the completion of the south wing,[33] although by this time, all of the Dix Island granite for the west wing had been delivered, as well as a large portion of the north wing.[34]

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[31]Letter from Robert Mills to Secretary of the Treasury Thomas Corwin, n.d., National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26.

[32]A. H. Bowman, "Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of Finances," June 20, 1857 (Washington, DC: William Harris, 1858), pp. 120-121.

[33]Letter from B. Oertly, Assistant Supervising Architect to A. B. Mullett, Supervising Architect, February 2, 1867, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1461.

[34]"Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances," June 30, 1859 (Washington, DC: George W. Bowman, 1860), p. 122.

The "vicissitudes" of the Civil War apparently brought almost a complete stop to construction, however, the work was resumed in February of 1862 with the northwest corner of the building holding the banking rooms and two vaults of the Treasurer of the United States and the Comptroller of the Currency planned for completion by the winter of 1863-1864.[35]

Although Isaiah Rogers did not officially resign until September 1865, Mullett had already taken over his duties during periods of absence. He was officially appointed Supervising Architect in May 1866. In the Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of Finances for 1863, Mullett made several recommendations for improvements, including "giving more importance to the north portico by increasing the dimensions of the same."[36]

In 1862, during the construction of the west wing, Isaiah Rogers, then Engineer in Charge of the Bureau of Construction, was asked to investigate available burglar proof vaults for both Treasury and other federal buildings under construction. After deciding that the vaults available were not properly secure, Rogers, who was also an inventor, invented and patented a unique burglar proof vault lining in 1863. The lining consisted of inserting two layers of cast iron balls between the traditional layers of wrought iron and hardened steel, which were held loosely in specially formed cavities, designed to rotate freely upon contact with a drill or other tool a burglar might use.

In 1864, Rogers contracted with George R. Jackson Burnet & Company to use his patents on all vaults needed by the Treasury Department for that year, which included four vaults located in the northwest corner of the Treasury Building. These were constructed as part of the original west wing construction, completed in 1864 and included two large fire and burglar proof iron vaults:

> "Two of them are twenty feet by twelve feet eleven inches by thirteen feet ten inches, and two eighteen feet seven inches by twelve feet eleven inches by thirteen feet ten inches. Each vault is provided with a double door, and each door with two locks of different patents. Their total cost amounted to $62,981.88. Two of them are located in the entrance story and in the cashier's room of the Treasurer of the United States, and two immediately over them in the second story are for the banking-room of the Comptroller of the Currency."[37]

The vaults were located in the northwest corner of the building with two vaults for the Office of the Treasurer on the entrance (second) floor and two for the Comptroller of the Currency on the third floor, each holding currency and bonds. The two offices worked together to implement the new National Banking System, begun in 1863 by the Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Chase.

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[35]Office of Supervising Architect, Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year Ending June 30, 1863 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1863), September 30, 1963, pp. 137-138.

[36]Office of Supervising Architect, Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year Ending June 30, 1863 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1863), September 30, 1963, p. 138.

[37]Office of the Supervising Architect, Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of Finances (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), p. 153.

The System included the creation of the Office of the Comptroller to supervise the national banks and to issue circulating monetary notes to the banks. Government bonds to secure the circulating notes were purchased by national banks, received by the Comptroller and placed in the Treasurer's vaults.[38]

Two of the four vaults were on the north side of the corridor opposite the stairwell. On the second floor the vault was used for the Cashier's vault for the Treasurer of the United States until 1869 when the office was transferred to the Cash Room; after 1869 it became a Bond Vault for the Division of National Banks. An identical vault on the third floor was used as a currency vault for the Comptroller of the Currency.[39] The other two vaults manufactured by George R. Jackson Burnet & Company in 1864 were possibly located adjacent to the south side of the stairwell in the west wing.[40]

In 1865, although no progress was made on the continuation of the north wing, "a large amount of materials" were "received in anticipation of the work" and Mullett again urged that the "early completion of the north wing is not only a desideratum, but a matter of necessity," adding that an appropriation of $500,000 would be necessary with the work completed in a relatively short amount of time.[41]

By 1866, nearly all of the remainder of the granite was delivered to the site, along with broken stone for the concrete footings and stone for the stone for foundation and cellar walls, with Mullett noting in the Report on the Finances that $157,270.76 was spent for granite for the north wing.[42]

On July 28, 1866, Congress appropriated $300,000 for the completion of the north wing and for grading and fencing the grounds; $30,000 for the replacement of defective copper roofs with slate

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[38]"Burglar Proof Vault Lining - 1864," research report in Curator's Office files, n.d., n.p.

[39]"Burglar Proof Vault Lining - 1864," research report in Curator's Office files, n.d., n.p.

[40]On the second floor, a c. 1875 drawing shows a vault south of the northeast stair (National Archives #166); by 1898 and 1909, it is not shown.

On the third floor, several drawings show a vault south of the northeast stair: one undated plan (National Archives #164) shows a "safe"; a c. 1869 plan (National Archives #171) shows a "vault"; as does a c. 1875 plan (National Archives #174); c. 1898 plan (National Archives #129); and 1909-1910 York & Sawyer plans (NA #135-136).

[41]Office of Supervising Architect, Report of Supervising Architect on the State of Finances (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1865), pp. 186-187.

[42]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on State of Finances for the Year 1866 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1866), pp. 191 and 193.

or copper; $30,000 for reconstruction of heating apparatus; and $30,000 for burglar-proof safes and vaults.[43] Another $50,000 was appropriated for the Treasury extension the following year.[44]

Mullett was assigned the task of finding suitable accommodations for the State Department so that the old State Department Building could be removed for construction of the north wing. On May 1, 1866, Mullett reported that it was "utterly impossible to find any accommodations;"[45] but by July 23, Mullett reported that the Orphan Asylum had been leased and was being "fitted up" for the State Department's use, with occupancy expected in October of 1866.[46]

Possession of the old State Department Building was obtained in November 1866 and the building was demolished by January of 1867. Some of the brick, slate, and hard stone from the foundations was salvaged and used in construction of the north wing;[47] other materials, including the freestone, were sold to the highest bidder.[48] Excavation for the north wing began immediately, with the first stone laid on April 1, 1867, and the remainder of the excavation completed a month later.

Due to concern over attaching the north wing to the existing building, it was decided to excavate the north wing 18 feet below the grade of the east and west wings and attach it securely running east and west. With other concerns over the poor construction of the old building and "peculiarly treacherous" soil, as well as the "excessive amount of rain and the uncertain state of the weather," Mullett decided to construct a temporary roof over the portion of work adjoining the old building.[49] The foundations abutting the existing structure were then constructed "as a retaining wall, buttressed by the various partitions."[50]

In terms of design, the north wing was to be finished in the same style as in the south, following the original design established by Walters. An early drawing, c. 1865, shows the facade with

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[43]39th Congress, Sess. 1, Ch. 295, 296, 1866, p. 310.

[44]39th Congress, Sess. II, Ch. 167, 1867, p. 461.

[45]Letter to Hon. Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury from A. B. Mullett, Acting Supervising Architect, May 1, 1866, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1456.

[46]Letter to Hon. Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury from A. B. Mullett, July 23, 1866, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1457.

[47]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 168.

[48]Invitation to Bid, Treasury Department, November 17, 1866, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1457.

[49]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 169.

[50]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 169.

acroterion along the roof edge and large eagle centered in the pediment, with "Department of State" across the building front.[51]

With Mullett's influence, however, the north wing ended up with some variations. As Mullett stated in his December 1867 report to Congress:

> "It has been my effort to carry out the architectural features of the building as nearly as possible in accordance with the original design, which I have made no attempt to change, but have in matters of detail corrected many errors that marred its harmony . . ."[52]

Because the east front of the building was out of level and the sandstone was deteriorated so rapidly that replacement was inevitable, Mullett decided it was best

> "to keep the water table of the east front of the north and south wings on the same level, and to make the connection in such a manner that on the completion of the building in granite the entire east front may be made mathematically correct by resetting a few of the connecting stones, and the errors in the west front, the portico of which is two inches below the proper level, avoided."[53]

Because of a shortage of granite which was ordered and received, Mullett omitted the sills on the courtyard front and the use of ashlar work on the small eastern portico, while "the moulded work and belt courses were recut to the same design as the remainder of the work, the windows restored to their original width, and the north front completed in entire accordance with the remainder of the building."[54]

Mullett also had to choose whether to use the "remarkable galvanized iron 'acroterial ornaments' and remove the stone balustrade, or to remove the galvanized iron and restore the stone balustrade."[55] Needless to say, he decided to finish the building with a stone balustrade per the original designs for the building, and removed "the paltry galvanized iron work that has so long disfigured and disgraced the grand western front of the building."[56] This was done in part because

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[51]"North Front, United States Treasury Extension," n.d., National Archives #36.

[52]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 169.

[53]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), pp. 170-171.

[54]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 171.

[55]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1868 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 184.

[56]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1868 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 184.

of the use of slate for the roof, rather than copper used on the east wing.[57] Mullett also corrected the height of the balustrade and base along the roof to conform with the rules of true classical style.[58]

On March 1, 1867, Mullett sent two plans for the granite work for the mezzanine story above the cornice on the interior court side of the north wing, proposing that necessary additional room be obtained by raising the cornice and constructing another story, similar to the rest of the building. His proposal was accepted, with a cost savings of $1,602.51,[59] and he reported to Secretary McCulloch that "the unsightly and inappropriate attic of cast-iron on the court-yard front has been omitted, and it will be completed entirely of granite, in harmony with the remainder of the work."[60]

To avoid the "great thrust on the outer walls, which has affected to a considerable degree the walls of the west wing," wrought iron beams with segmental arches were substituted for the brick groining used in the south and west wings as the ceiling of the cellar and support for the basement floor.[61] The heavy brick walls and pillars used previously were replaced with massive stonework. In the corridors of the basement floor, Steinmetz, who was superintending the work, forgot to leave room for the cornice and Mullett, who was in New York at the time, wrote to B. Oertly to make sure he did not repeat the same mistake on the other floors.[62]

Because of the addition of the Cash Room, Mullett increased the depth of the building by 18 feet by bringing the portico forward to allow room for the Cash Room and the hall.

Other changes, or correction of "errors", included substituting granite coffered ceilings on the north wing portico instead of painted cast iron; reducing pilasters to equal faces at re-entering angles; and using iron architraves for the windows (stucco was used on the west wing, which were continually broken and damaged).[63]

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[57]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 171.

[58]D. Mullett Smith, "US Treasury's Supervising Architects' Department 1861 to 1874" (Washington, DC: Mullett-Smith Press, 1995), p. 1.

[59]Letter to Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury from A. B. Mullett, Supervising Architect, March 1, 1867, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1461.

[60]Report from Alfred B. Mullett to Secretary Hugh McCulloch, "Report of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department," September 30, 1867, p. 7.

[61]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 171.

[62]Letter from A. B. Mullett, New York to B. Oertly, July 19, 1867, National Archives, RG 121, Supervising Architects Files, Box 1469.

[63]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 169.

Other changes were made by Mullett in an attempt to effect cost savings. These included eliminating the decoration on the stonework in the north courtyard; reducing the thickness and weight of the iron castings of the pilasters lining the hall, 3/4 to 1-1/4 inch thick.....[64] and reducing the weight of the window and door frames from 25 to 50 per centum.[65]

Another change adopted for the construction of the north wing was the air supply source for the heating system. Air in the south and west wings was supplied to the heating system trough an air duct located directly over the main sewer, with the unhappy result of the air supply contaminated by "noxious gases".[66] For the north wing, Mullett redesigned the system to provide ridge ventilation with air "drawn pure from the exterior of the building and entirely protected from the possibility of any contamination whatever."[67] In 1869, since the north wing ventilation had proven to be so successful, the same system was extended to the remainder of the building with the stairways ventilated on the same principle.[68]

Beginning with his annual report of 1867 and continuing through 1870, Mullett proposed condemning a strip of land 61 feet wide on the east side of 15th Street from New York Avenue to Pennsylvania Avenue to "render the north front the most attractive and elegant of the building, the effect being mainly produced by that thorough harmony between the building and its surroundings".[69] His recommendation, however, was never carried out.

Mullett was in New York at the time construction began on the north wing. He wrote Oertly:

> "we have entirely forgotten all the stone work of the stairway and the beams connecting the columns. If I mistake not the stone platforms and a portion of the steps were used by Rogers on the West Front. Will you please see to this and order the missing stone work of Roberts (if any) without a moments delay. Order the Iron lintels also if there are any

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[64] Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), pp. 169-179.

[65] Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 170.

[66] Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 170.

[67] Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 170.

[68] Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1870 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1870), p. 294.

[69] Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 172.

needed or anything else necessary to complete the stairway. I cannot imagine how I have overlooked this.[70]

Work on the north wing progressed rapidly and without delays. In the Report of the Secretary of Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867, Mullett described the magnitude of work:

> "although the space covered is but 19,960 square feet, the following amounts of material have been used in its construction since April 1, 1867, viz: 1,750-1/2 yards concrete, 2,242,000 bricks, 30,000 cubic feet rubble masonry, 80,000 cubic feet granite, 262,321 pounds iron beams, 387,608 pounds cast-iron work, 20,700 pounds wrought-iron anchors, 159,540 feet timber for scaffolding, centres, and platforms. The amount of excavation performed is 15,000 cubic yards."[71]

Requests for proposals for materials needed for the construction of the north wing were advertised in the Daily National Republican, published in Washington, DC, including proposals for iron work, mahogany, slate, stylobate, granite, marble, stone, as well as for the sale of frame buildings and machinery which was no longer needed.[72]

On June 12, 1867, proposals for 2700 slates of a uniform dark color were requested, to match those already in place on the roof of the building. The slate were to be 18"x24", between 1/4" and 1/2" thick, with at least one face "smooth and true, the edges sawed" and delivered by October 1, 1867.[73]

On August 26, 1867, a contract was awarded to Thomas J. Gagliardo, an Italian marble exporter, for $18,000 in gold. This contract covered all of the marble facings for the Cash Room's first floor except the cornice beneath the balcony, including 48 pilasters with bases, shafts and capitals in the "best blue Italian marble" and wall slabs of sienna bardiglio bordered with black and gold molding panels.[74]

On November 8, 1867, proposals were requested for "furnishing and delivering at the site . . . the MARBLE TILE, MANTLES, WASHSTANDS and BASES" for the north wing, to be delivered

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[70]Letter from A. B. Mullett, New York to B. Oertly, May 1, 1867, National Archives, RG 121, Supervising Architects Files, Box 1469.

[71]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 172.

[72]Invoice from William J. Murtagh for Treasury Extension, Voucher No. 16, October 1868 for "Advertising - $244.00", National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1463.

[73]"Proposals for Slate," June 12, 1867, Treasury Extension, Voucher No. 16, October 1868 for "Advertising - $244.00", National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1463.

[74]Bid of Thos. J. Gagliardo, August 24, 1867, National Archives, RG 121, Box 1461, as cited in Lehman, p. 38.

by February 1, 1868. About 10,000 square feet of superficial feet of marble tile was requested: to be black and white, 12 inches square and one inch thick to match that on the west wing. The white marble was to be of veined Italian marble, "of good texture and color;" the black marble was also to be of equal quality of that installed in the West Wing with borders in the halls also of black marble. Skirting for the rooms and halls was to be "best dove-colored Vermont marble, with about 7,000 lineal feet required for the building. Washstand fronts were also to be of veined Italian marble, with 40-50 required.[75] Fisher & Bird, of New York, was awarded four marble and tile contracts with a total cost of $22,535, which included $13,160 for the upper Cash Room facades (pilasters, panels, ashlar, moldings, curved corners); $5,225 for corridor tiles; $525 for Cash Room floor tiles; and $3,150 for the marble cornice in the Cash Room.[76] Due to several difficulties including Fisher & Bird having second thoughts about providing the upper Cash Room facades, and Mullett's discovery that the Cash Room's obligations exceeded the available funds, the Department released Fisher & Bird from the contract for the Cash Room.[77]

On June 8, 1868, proposals were requested for 250 perches of Gneiss or Seneca Stone (truck sizes), to be delivered within one month from date of acceptance of proposal.[78]

Light Fixtures

On May 19, 1868, Mullett wrote The Tucker Manufacturing Company of New York, manufacturers of "gas and kerosene fixtures, Tucker's patent spring beds, iron bedsteads and cots", that he was in receipt of their sample chandelier and to please send him samples of fixtures adapted to public buildings.[79] In June he received samples and he wrote back, asking for prices for four and six light chandeliers, with the understanding that none of them be sold to private parties.[80] In August of 1868, Mullett began to order the fixtures for the north wing. Vouchers were submitted for 203 fixtures:

12 two-light pendants, No. 517 @ $5.50
29 four-light chandeliers @ $50.00
78 six-light chandeliers @ $70.00

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[75]Treasury Department, Office of the Supervising Architect, November 8, 1867, Treasury Extension, Voucher No. 16, October 1868 for "Advertising - $244.00", National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1463.

[76]"Analysis of Proposals for Sundry Marblework for Treasury Extension. . . opened November 26th, 1868," National Archives, RG 121, Box 1461, as cited in Lehman, p. 40.

[77]Lehman, p. 41.

[78]Treasury Department, Office of the Supervising Architect, June 9, 1868, Treasury Extension, Voucher No. 16, October 1868 for "Advertising - $244.00", National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1463.

[79]Letter from A. Mullett to Thos. Fisher, Esq., Pres. Tucker Mfg. Co., May 19, 1968.

[80]Letter from Mullett to Tucker, June 2, 1868.

Specified locations: 18 Basement; 14 First Story; 17 Second Story; 21 Third Story; 6 Attic; and 1 Unspecified location (sample)

10 eight-light chandeliers (one specified for vestibule, main entrance)
1 nine-light chandelier @ $60.00
34 double swing brackets @ $3.50
28 No. 532 brackets @ $2.50[81]

An agent for the Tucker Manufacturing Company in Washington, A. R. Shepherd Company, supplied additional various low-cost fixtures including:

20 one-light pendants @ $1.75
45 two-light pendants @ $3.50
8 four-light pendants @ $15.00
20 brackets @ $8.00[82]

In October of 1868, Mullett sent Tucker Manufacturing a schedule for placement of chandeliers:

	Large Chandeliers	Hall Chandeliers	Height of Story
Basement	18	6	13'
1st Story	14	5	14'3"
2nd Story	17	6	13'4"
3rd Story	21	6	13'4"
Attic	6	4	10'8"[83]

The four-light gas fixtures were used in the hallways; it is probable that the six-light were used in the offices. A description of a six-light chandelier (No. 523) shipped in the spring of 1868 included "six 7-1/2" globes with view of Treasury Building Engraved on them;"[84] other references referred to "Large Treasury Pattern.[85] Further references to the Treasury pattern include a letter in February of 1869 when Mullett rejects fixtures because "the six 1/2" cut globes. . .have no view of the Treasury Building on them. On each globe are to be Treasy. etc. with stars between."[86]

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[81]Research Report on Gaslight Fixtures by Terry Brooks and Katherine Whitney, February 18, 1986, p. 5.

[82]"Abstract of Lighting Vouchers, 1860-1871", n.d., Treasury Curator's Office Files.

[83]Letter from A. Mullett to Tucker Mfg. Co., October 6, 1868.

[84]Letter from Tucker Manufacturing Company dated February 16, 1869, National Archives, RG 121, Box 1465.

[85]Katherine Whitney, "Research Report - Lighting Suppliers, 1861-70," December 20, 1985, p. 6.

[86]Letter from A. Mullett to Tucker Manufacturing Co., February 16, 1869.

Fixtures continued to be shipped through 1871 including a eight-light chandelier for the main entrance shipped in September of 1870[87] and 32 additional six-light chandeliers in the Treasury pattern for four floors with seven chandeliers to be 14'1/2" above the floor in height; thirteen to be 14'1/2" in height; ten to be 13'2" in height; and two to be 13'1" from the floor.[88]

Heating and Ventilation Systems

The heating apparatus, designed by Mullett, differed from the systems used in the earlier wings, and proved to be such a success that the remainder of the building was converted to this system. A letter to Mullett in 1867 contained suggestions for the heating and ventilation of the extension which included delivering fresh air on the outer and opposite side of the hall, having transoms over all the doors leading to the hallways, and placing small exhaust flues on each side of the entrance doors which would lead to the attic and capped above the roof in large square cupolas.[89]

Mullett's design used hot water to heat fresh air. An 1870 account noted that the system

> "is constructed so that only pure air is used in heating the building. To do this a current is introduced directly from the court and front, and passed through chambers containing iron coils filled with hot water. As the air becomes noxious it escapes by means of openings constructed for the purpose near the floor of the various rooms.
>
> That heat thus engendered is pure, and will not affect the occupants of the rooms with that suffocating oppression felt from the heat of a hot air furnace."[90]

The system was called a "Hot Water Heating Apparatus," which was to warm the north wing of the building "in part by direct radiation by placing heaters in the various halls, rooms, &c, and partly by hot air conducted through flues to the space to be heated, from heaters placed in the Cellar.. . of sufficient capacity to heat to 70° F. the volume of air passing through the said flues . . during the coldest season." The heaters were to be cast iron and the radiators provided with "neat screens" of cast iron or wire with 1-1/4" marble tops with water heated by wrought iron boilers.[91] The system was a success, described as "well heated and ventilated, a constant supply of pure air

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[87]Letter to Mullett from Tucker Manufacturing Co., September 14, 1870.

[88]Letter from A. Mullett to Tucker Manufacturing Co., September 18, 1871.

[89]Letter to A. B. Mullett from Lewis W. Leeds, Germantown, March 15, 1867, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1467.

[90]"The North Wing of the Treasury Department," The Architectural Review & Builder's Journal, September 1870, p. 171.

[91]Contract with David L. Bartlett and Horace W. Robbins, Baltimore, Maryland, dated November 8, 1867.

being provided at all times of the year."[92] The hot water boilers were fired by coal in the cellar; an 1870 inspection "found all in working order. . .but it is a matter of impossibility to please the Ladies throughout the Building generally."[93]

Due to the combination of wood burning fireplaces, gas lighting fixtures, water closets as well as various processes throughout the building for printing and destroying old currency, proper ventilation in the building was extremely important. As designed by Robert Mills, the two large interior courtyards provided windows for interior office spaces. An areaway was constructed around the exterior of the building to provide windows and thus fresh air to basement occupants. The north wing corridor ran east to west, extending to outer windows to provide ventilation with operable transoms above each door. And with the reconstruction and integration of the northwest corner of the building, each corner of the building had a open stairwell which served as a large ventilating shaft. Atop each stairwell was a dome with skylights and ventilators. Large vertical chases were installed parallel to the stairwells and vented the basements through cast iron grills,[94] described by Lewis Leeds, "Consulting Engineer of Ventilation and Heating for the US Treasury Department," in a letter to Mullett:

> "for the purpose of securing a constant, certain, and rapid exhaustion from the halls of the more contaminated air pouring into them from the occupied rooms, I have thought it best to devote the whole of the two large flues, formed in the angle behind the circle of the stairs, exclusively to that purpose, and to utilise (sic) to its fullest extent all the heat, great care must be taken not to allow any opening whatever to be made into these flues excepting at the very bottom of them, or under the stairs, on a level with the basement floor, here should be the only opening, and that should be equal to the whole capacity of the flue, and may be protected by a coarse wire netting. The smoke and waste heat from the furnaces should be carried up in the centre of these flues in a sheet iron pipe which will cause a very strong draught."[95]

Decorative bronze grills were used with this system in the Cash Room; in the offices, perforated cast iron grilles were placed in the baseboards below the windows.[96]

North Wing Vaults

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[92]Letter from A. B. Mullett to George S. Boutwell, Secretary of the Treasury, May 20, 1870, National Archives, RG 121.

[93]Letter to A. B. Mullett from William H. Colem, December 8, 1870, National Archives RG 121.

[94]Paula Mohr, Heating and Ventilation: The Treasury Building, 1836-1869, Maryland Historical Trust, Research Papers in Building Technology, April 1996, p. 21.

[95]Letter to Mullett from Lewis Leeds, Box 1461, Entry 26, Record Group 121, National Archives, as cited in Paula Mohr, Heating and Ventilation: The Treasury Building, 1836-1869, April 1996, p. 21.

[96]One cast iron grill, located in Room 1127, remains in the north wing.

In July 3, 1868, Mullett placed an ad for proposals for "furnishing and putting up a burglar proof vault for the Cashiers in the north wing. . . constituted of alternate plates, of the best quality of English spring steel, and case hardened, and the best quality of boiler plates, framed and secured to wrought iron beams in the best manner,"[97] with the proposal of L. H. Miller of Baltimore accepted on July 14 for $11,850.[98] A payment of $8,100 was made on February 23, 1869, noting a contract of $9,000.[99]

In spring of 1869, construction for vaults and safes for the Currency Bureau and the Internal Revenue as well as for the Redemption Division began.[100] Bids were requested for a cast iron safe for the basement room of the north wing; a contract was awarded to Bartlett Robbins & Company on April 20, 1869 for $2,650,[101] with payment made in May.[102]

Another contract was awarded to Pettil Dripps and Company on May 4, 1869 for $2,170 to provide a cast iron vault under the north portico (either Vault 3 or 4 on the first floor); the vault was installed and final payment made by August 17, 1869.[103]

On June 8, 1869, the bid of Wm. T. Duvall was accepted for safes (currency vaults) in the northwest center and west center of the fourth floor (then "third story") for $2200 for a small safe and $2800 for a large safe.[104] Payments were made to Wm. T. Duvall on July 28 for "vault gate complete in Cashiers Room - $400.00; on September 1 for "2 Cast Iron Safes for Currency Vaults

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[97]"Proposal for Treasury Vault," July 3, 1868, National Republican, statement of account for The United States to Wm. J. Murtagh, Dr., National Archives RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1463.

[98]Proposal for Vault, L. H. Miller, July 14, 1868, National Archives RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1463.

[99]Appropriation to L. H. Miller for Fire and Burglar proof Vaults for Depositories, February 23, 1869, $8,100, National Archives RG 121.

[100]W. G. Steinnetz, "Work done on the Treasury Building during the year," October 1, 1869, National Archives, RG 121, Letters Received 1843-1910, Entry 26, Box 1464.

[101]Letter from Bartlett Robbins & Co. to A. B. Mullett, Esq. re proposal for a Safe for Basement Room of the North Wing, April 17, 1869, amount of $2,650, National Archives RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1465.

[102]Appropriation for Fire and Burglar Proof Vaults for Depositories, to Bartlett-Robbins & Co., May 1869, $2,650.

[103]"Appropriation for Fire and Burglar Proof Vaults for Depositories," July 30 and August 17, 1869, National Archives RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1464.

[104]"Synopsis of proposals for furnishing two (2) safes...," June 8, 1869, National Archives RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1466.

- $5,000.00" and "Mooring and Setting 1 Vault in Attic 3 floor"= $75.00;[105] and on September 15, 1869 for furnishing a cast iron vault on the third story (fourth floor).[106]

Two vaults were located on the east side of the Cash Room, one on the entrance (second) floor (later numbered Vault 6) and one off the gallery on the third floor (later numbered Vault 8). Both were accessed through doors on the center of the east wall of the Cash Room and were open to visitors to the building. According to an 1876 description:

> "The vaults are of steel and chilled iron, about 20 by 15 ft. Another of the same capacity is overhead. The amount usually in the vault is about $10,000,000 including gold coin. The money is kept in packages or bags in the wooden cases. Near the door of the vault is an elevator used for conveying money between the vaults above and express office immediately below. As much as $5,000,000 have been shipped to the different sub-treasuries in a single day."[107]

This description also described the two reserve vaults in the basement, which were not open to visitors.[108]

Completion of the North Wing

Mullett had hoped to have the three upper floors completed and occupied by December 1, 1868, with the remainder largely completed by January 1, 1869, just two years after the demolition of the old State Department building,[109] however, due to difficulties obtaining materials, the north wing was not completed and occupied until June of 1869. With the completion of the north wing, the building was completed at a total cost of $6,127,465.32.[110]

Mullett was proud of his endeavors in the completion of the north wing, in part for its swift construction and control of costs, but more importantly for the quality of its construction, making

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[105] Appropriation for Fire and Burglar Proof Safes and Vaults to Wm. T. Duvall, October 28, 1869, $1072.50.

[106] "Appropriation for fire and burglar proof vaults for depositories," September 15, 1869, $800.00, National Archives RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1466. This was probably the vault located in the northwest corner on the west side, shown on plans dated c. 1875 (National Archives #173) and 1898 (NA #175) and called "Shipping Vault" on the 1909 plan (NA #130).

[107] Keim's Illustrated Handbook, Washington and its Environs, 1876.

[108] Keim's Illustrated Handbook, Washington and its Environs, 1876.

[109] Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1868 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 183.

[110] A History of Public Buildings Under the Control of the Treasury Department (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), p. 85.

the north wing "the best finished and most durable portion [of the building], and, as far as the original design would permit, the best and most artistic work that the skill of American mechanics could produce."[111]

The final portion of the north wing to be completed in 1870 and 1871 was the reconstruction and integration of the northwest corner of the building built in 1864 as the north end of the west wing. This corner of the building originally had no stairwell and was unpartitioned space. Two early floor plans of the entrance story (present day second floor) show a "safe" where the stair is now located as well as one opposite on the north wall. These are, in all likelihood, the two Isaiah Rogers vaults constructed in 1864 during the west wing construction.[112] On the second floor (present day third floor), floor plans show two vaults in this corner, one in the northeast corner directly above the vault below and one immediately south of the present day stairwell.[113]

The integration of this corner into the north wing included the construction of the northwest stair from the basement to the attic floor and the removal of the vault on the second floor in the location of the stairwell. The other two Isaiah Rogers vaults on the north wall remained; a progress report of October 1, 1869 stated that not much had been done on the alterations because rooms were still being occupied by the Clerks, "except for the entrance floor, where the rooms are built, and ready for occupancy, and Vault Room, 3rd floor for Internal Revenue."[114] The reconstruction included partitioning the spaces on each floor with the corridor connecting from the west to the north wing around the stairwell as well as extending out to the outer west wall where a window provided ventilation to the corridor. Offices were placed on the west side and along the north side of the corridor.

By the end of 1870, Mullett reported that

> "the reconstruction of the interior of the northwest corner of the building, which has been a task of more than usual difficulty, is nearly finished, and will complete the interior of the extension."[115]

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[111] Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1868 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 183.

[112] "Entrance Story," c. 1865, National Archives #34 shows building prior to construction of north wing with two safes; National Archives #157, also c. 1865 shows a preliminary outline of the north wing, also with two safes.

[113] "Plan of Second Story," n.d., National Archives #164; "Plan of Second Story," c. 1869, National Archives #170 and #171; "Plan of Second Story," c. 1875, National Archives #174; "Plan of Second Story," c. 1898, National Archives #129; "Plan of Second Story," July 1909, National Archives #135; and "Proposed Reassignment," July 1910, National Archives #136, all show a vault in this location.

[114] W. G. Stennetz, "Report of work performed in the Treasury Building and approaches during the year ending September 30, 1869," National Archives, RG 121, Box 26, Entry 1465.

[115] Report of the Secretary of the Treasurer on the State of the Finances for the Year 1870 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1870), p. 294.

Construction of the Cash Room

Perhaps the most significant deviation to the original plans made by Mullett for the north wing and Mullett's most striking design contribution to the interior of the Treasury Building was for the creation of "a suitable business room for the Treasurer's cashier and his assistants."[116] The result: "a palatial banking-office, all its appurtenances being sumptuous and ornate."[117] Previous to construction of the north wing, a temporary room for banking purposes was provided at the north end of the west wing.

Original plans for the basement and entrance story showed a large open room, 118'-11" long and 20'-4" deep between the two stairwells on the south side of the north wing.[118] A later, undated drawing bearing Mullett's name shows the creation of the Cash Room, bumping out 12 feet into the courtyard space with two office spaces on either side adjacent to the stairwells.[119]

For the Cash Room, Mullett proposed to

> "project the centre of the court-yard front twelve feet, which in no sense detracts from the appearance of the building, and provides a fine room, which it is believed will prove ample for the transaction of business, be creditable to the government and an ornament to the building. The unsightly and inappropriate attic of cast-iron on the court-yard front has been omitted, and it will be completed entirely of granite, in harmony with the remainder of the work."[120]

As the only public room in the Treasury building, Mullett "considered that this room should be in the purity of its design, and by the avoidance of all shams and imitations of material, be emblematic of the dignity of the nation and the stability of its credit."[121] Before designs were approved by the Honorable William E. Chandler, assistant secretary and Honorable F. E. Spinner, the Treasurer of the United States, the costs of scagliola, frescoing and painting were investigated

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[116]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 170.

[117]Joseph West Moore, Picturesque Washington: Pen and Pencil Sketches (Providence: J.A. & R.A. Reid, Publishers, 1887), p. 184.

[118]Plan of Basement Story, North Wing, Drawing No. 348 (Original drawing), Treasury Drawing No. 1352 and Plan of Entrance Story, North Wing (Original drawing), Treasury Drawing No. 1353, n.d.

[119]"Plan of Cellars, Treasury Building," A. B. Mullett, Supervising Architect, Treasury Department, Treasury Drawing 1401, n.d.

[120]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 170.

[121]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1868 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 183.

with the design was determined to be "not more costly than was demanded by the use for which it was intended."[122]

Construction of the Cash Room began in 1867 with the start of the north wing. On September 25, 1867, proposals were requested for the Cash Room, for

> "furnishing, fitting, and delivering complete, the stylobate finish and counter of the new Banking-room in the North Wing. . . to be of polished Granite or polished Marble; if of the later material the Base should be of dark (if not black) color, and the upper members of variegated marble, but of harmonious tints."[123]

Six bids were received and opened October 15, 1867, with a contract for $7,800.00 signed two days later with Henry Parry of New York[124] to include:

> "Black American Marble for the Base; Bardilla and Dove-colored marble for the body of stylobate; Sienna marble for the panels; Tennessee marble for stylobate; dies or piers Bardilla marble for the neck-moulding, and Dove-colored American marble for the upper mouldings and top counter-top inclusive. . . done . . on or before the first day of March 1868."[125]

Proposals were received and opened on November 8, 1867, with a contract awarded to Fisher & Bird of New York on November 26 from the Office of the Supervising Architect for sundry marble work including furnishing tile for the floor of the Cash Room lobby[126] (invoices show cases of 12 inch Italian marble) and for the Italian marble cornice.

On February 26, 1868, bids were received for the bronze railing for the Cash Room, with the low bidder and contract awarded to M. L. Curtiss of New York at $25 per lineal foot for No. 1 & 2 finish and $28 per lineal foot for No. 3 & 4 finish.[127] The bronze railing was designed by J. Goldsborough Bruff, a designer/draftsman in the Office of the Supervising Architect. Bruff was

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[122]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1868 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 183.

[123]"Proposal," September 25, 1867, Treasury Extension, Voucher No. 16, October 1868 for "Advertising - $244.00", National Archives, RG 121.

[124]Synopsis of Proposals for Furnishing the Stylobate Finish and Counter of the New Banking Room in North Wing of the Treasury Building, October 15, 1867, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1461.

[125]Contract between A. B. Mullett, Supervising Architect and Henry Parry, October 17, 1867, p. 2.

[126]Analysis of Proposals Received Under Advertisement of November 8, 1867 for Marble work for Treasury Extension, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26.

[127]Synopsis of Proposals for Bronzed Railing for Cashiers Room, opened February 26, 1868, National Archives, RG 121.

also responsible for the design of the original Cash Room counter, the pilaster capitals lining the south, west and north wings, and a number of lighting fixtures for the south wing.

On July 1, 1868, bids were received for the construction of a burglar proof vault for the Cash Room with a contract for $11,850 signed on July 30, 1868, between Mullett and L. H. Miller of Baltimore, Maryland. The vault was to include

> "one burglar proof door and one grate door. . . the bottom, top and sides of the vault and the jambs of the door to be constructed of alternate plates of one quarter inch boiler plate and best quality of English Sprint Steel, case hardened, five in number, the joints on the outside to be covered by wrought iron bay, and the angles of the vault on the outside and inside with wrought angle iron, the side plates to be bolted to wrought iron T bars. . . and the top to be supported by six inch wrought iron H beams, all riveted or bolted together in the most secure manner and according to the most approved systems of safe making. The panels formed by the outside bar iron to be moulded by cast iron mouldings on the front, the space between vault walls and ceiling to be enclosed by cast iron plates, and the vault to be ventilated by connecting it by means of pipe made perfectly secure to the chimney flue."[128]

On August 27, 1868, bids were received to set the marble work above the first stylobate which was set. A contract was signed with Alexander Rutherford of Washington, DC for $3,300 with work was to be completed by January 1, 1869.[129]

On September 14, 1868, a letter was received from Henri Lovie of Philadelphia to supply the bronze cornice of the balcony of the Cash Room at a cost of $1 per pound, to be made of "brass bronzed"; his proposal was accepted the same date.[130]

A large 42-light chandelier was constructed by the M. L. Curtis Company for a sum of $1500, with instructions for installation sent to Mullett on December 21, 1868. Mullett was extremely pleased with the chandelier but felt that two additional but smaller chandeliers would be necessary to "finish the room properly." Curtis fabricated two additional 24-light chandeliers and sent them but Mullett found them to be too small. Mullett then requested two more chandeliers be made, to be one fourth the size of the 42 light chandelier, with 36-lights. These were installed in June 1869

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[128]Contract between the United States of America and L. H. Miller of the City of Baltimore, July 30, 1868.

[129]Contract between the United States of America and Alexander Rutherford, August 29, 1868.

[130]Letter from Henri N. Lovie to A. B. Mullett, September 14, 1868, National Archives, RG 121.

at a cost of $1300 each.[131] In the end, Curtis was paid $5,600 for the five fixtures which were fabricated.[132]

On January 18, 1869, Pottier & Stymus of New York wrote to A. B. Mullett suggesting that the size of the plate glass panels set in the "mahogany and ebony black mouldings" for the partitions on the counter be increased for easier access for deposits.[133] On May 22, the mahogany ebony desk screens were shipped with two plates of glass, 105 x 24 inches; five plates 83 x 24 inches; and two plates, 24 x 8 inches.[134]

As Mullett had planned to complete the north wing by January 1, 1869,[135] it was decided to hold the Inauguration Reception for President Ulysses S. Grant there on March 4, 1869. Traditionally, the evening inaugural festivities consisted of a grand ball given in honor of the outgoing president and his successor. That year, however, the event was called a "reception" to avoid having to invited the unpopular ex-president Andrew Johnson.

As the deadline grew near, Mullett pressed his suppliers, especially Henry Parry, a marble dealer from New York who was typically in arrears on deliveries. Finally, Mullett ordered three slabs of bardiglio marble from another dealer, A. D. Shepard of New York, which were sent by railway express, whereas stone was at this time normally shipped by sea.[136] Towards the end, shipments were arriving with scarcely enough time for installation, such as the two smaller chandeliers which arrived from M. L. Curtis & Company on March 1.[137]

Although still incomplete, the Cash Room was made ready for the event with red, white and blue bunting[138] and evergreens decorating the bare brick walls on the Cash Room's upper floors to

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[131]Letter to Hon. George S. Boutwell, Secretary of the Treasury from A. B. Mullett, Supervising Architect, June 25, 1869, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1465.

[132]A. B. Mullett to George S. Boutwell, Secretary of the Treasury, June 25, 1869, Letterbook June-July 1869, National Archives, as cited by Donald J. Lehman, "The Cash Room: Alias Treasury of the US, An Architectural History," July 24, 1975, p. 2.

[133]Letter to A. B. Mullett from Pottier & Stymus, January 18, 1869, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1465.

[134]Letters to A. B. Mullett from Pottier & Stymus, May 15 and May 22, 1869, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1465.

[135]Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1868 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 183.

[136]Donald J. Lehman, "The Cash Room: Alias Treasury of the US, An Architectural History," July 24, 1975, p. 9.

[137]Donald J. Lehman, "The Cash Room: Alias Treasury of the US, An Architectural History," July 24, 1975, p. 9.

[138]Letter to A. B. Mullett from Captain John McGowan, February 26, 1869, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26, Box 1465.

cover the brick where marble had not yet arrived. The uncompleted stone floor was covered with a temporary wood floor which had been "well waxed." Over the west door was hung a large oil portrait of the "Goddess of Liberty" with a full length portrait of Abraham Lincoln on the facing wall.

Two thousand tickets were sold, with each ticket admitting a gentleman and two ladies. Outside the north wing, gas jets spelled "PEACE" in nine foot high letters, flanked by stars. The Cash Room served as the main ballroom, with musicians playing from the balcony. Other dancing halls and bands were stationed throughout the north wing, was linked by telegraph to the Cash Room so that the same music could be played simultaneously.

Other spaces in the north wing were used for the event. Across the hall from the Cash Room was a "capacious" room for the use of the Diplomatic Corps. On the third floor was a dancing hall in the northeast corner, 90 x 20 feet, with one adjoining room for use by Vice President Colfax and another for President Grant, 20 x 35 feet in size. Adjoining this room was a reception room for the ladies of the Presidential party. On the fourth floor was another dancing hall in the northeast corner, similar to the one on the third floor, with three rooms open to visitors directly above the President and Vice President's reception rooms. Also on the fourth floor, above the Cash Room, were two large rooms used as ladies cloak rooms. The fifth floor (the attic story) was used exclusively as cloak rooms for the gentleman.[139]

On the first floor was a large dancing hall in the northeast corner, directly below those on the upper floors. Adjoining this to the east was the dining room for President Grant and Vice President Colfax. Beneath the north portico was a large room set up as the ladies' tea and coffee and promenade room. Across the hall, below the Cash Room, was the principal dining room, which was set up as a horse-shoe shaped buffet. Kitchens were arranged on each end of the large dining room.[140]

Unfortunately, a lack of planning for the crowd of 5,000-6,000 turned the evening into a disaster. As early as 8:00 pm, an immense crowd had gathered at the 15th Street entrance for admittance. By 10:00 pm, the "jam in the passages and on the stairways was terrific" and "swooning ladies were being handled about in a matter-of-fact, routine way, as it if were part of the programme."[141] No arrangements had been made for seating or proceeding to the dining rooms. Waiters were unable to keep enough food on the table and when a huge crowd stormed the kitchen, a stout female cook held them back by swirling rags of dirty dishwater at the invaders.[142]

Towards the end of the evening, "A Wild Hunt for Overcoats" caused the evening's greatest disaster. Due to the lack of a proper coat check system, hats and overcoats were left in jumbled

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[139]"The Inauguration Reception," The Evening Star, March 4, 1869.

[140]"The Inauguration Reception," The Evening Star, March 4, 1869.

[141]"Inauguration Reception Grand Affair," The Evening Star, March 5, 1869.

[142]"Inauguration Reception Grand Affair," The Evening Star, March 5, 1869.

heaps with no regard for a numbering system. The men waited for hours on the fourth floor, many as late as 4:00 am, while others were back the following day to search the cloakrooms for their belongings.

While the Cash Room walls were more or less complete in time for the Inaugural Reception on March 4, the counter and cages were installed in early April 1869 and the floor was laid in May and June of 1869. An electric clock was installed in 1872 (which ran on dry batteries), which was replaced in 1885 when electricity was installed in the building.

During the completion of the magnificent Cash Room, Mullett was criticized for placing two bardiglio marble plaques listing the six officers of the Treasury Department during the construction of the north wing, as well as himself. Names included: Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury from 1865 to 1869; Assistant Secretaries William E. Chandler and James P. Hartley; W. H. Hunt, Chief Clerk; F. E. Spinner, Treasurer of the United States; and A. B. Mullett, Supervising Architect. Mullett was told by Chandler that the plaque was in poor taste and to remove it, but Mullett never did (and so it remains today).

The Cash Room was widely written up in publications of the day, touted as "one of the most magnificent halls in the world" with "the interior arrangements and decorations. . on a scale of magnificence consistent with the wealth of the nation."[143]

[143]Edward Winslow Martin, Behind the Scenes in Washington (Continental and National Publishing Companies, n.d.), p. 309.

North Wing Grounds

Several c. 1865 plans showed steps leading down to a driveway across the front of the building paralleling Pennsylvania Avenue with a fountain situated between the driveway and Pennsylvania Avenue[144]; other c. 1865 drawings showed a sidewalk but not a driveway running east to west across the building.[145]

In June of 1865, Mullett submitted a plan for an arrangement of granite posts "to form entrance gates from Pennsylvania Avenue facing the Capitol and Lafayette Square." A previously prepared plan contained five iron gates and six granite posts; Mullett's proposed plan (which would save the Department $8,816.00) called for resetting fence and gates, three new iron gates and additional iron fencing, less flagging, steps and platforms which could be used on other portions of the building.[146]

A c. 1868 drawing by Mullett showed the design as built with steps descending from the north portico, bounded on either side by a balustrade. Two differing schemes for paving on the north portico paving were prepared, one with an eight point flower and another with a six point star; the six point star was constructed.[147] Centered in front of the building was a large fountain with a base 12 feet in diameter and five feet high.[148] From the fountain out towards Pennsylvania Avenue was a matching balustrade leading to steps up to the street level. At the street level was a pair of lamp standards.

The fountain was constructed in 1869 while the north wing was nearing completion. Beals & Dixon, suppliers of the granite for the south, west and north wings were paid $35,960.72 for labor and granite including: "12 Basin Stones; 4 Corner Platforms; 8 Centre; 4 Sub-basins; 1 Cube; For beds, backs, joints, drilling holes through tazza, cube, basin, etc.; Stock for Tazza; Cutting and carving sinkage, 4 lion heads."[149]

The lawn areas on both sides of the balustrade were shown with plants.

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[144]Office of the Supervising Architect, "Treasury and Grounds," November 1865, National Archives #5.

[145]"Design for Grading Treasury Grounds," No. 3, c. 1869, National Archives #11.

[146]Letter to Hon. Hugh MuCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury from A. B. Mullett, Supervising Architect, June 20, 1865.

[147]"Tiling for Floor of North Portico," c. 1868 (NA #234) and May 1868 (NA #236).

[148]"The North Wing of the Treasury Department," The Architectural Review and Builder's Journal, September 1870, p. 171.

[149]Pay Voucher prepared by W. G. Steinmetz, Asst. Superintendent and Sworn Measurer, March 11, 1869, National Archives, RG 121, Entry 26.